

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

### Listing of Claims:

- 1           1. (Currently amended) A computer-implemented method of facilitating a  
2 distributed search for a procurement request, comprising:  
3           receiving the procurement request from a user, wherein the procurement  
4 request is subject to organizational procurement controls, and wherein the  
5 procurement request involves requesting goods and/or services;  
6           using the organizational procurement controls to determine if the search  
7 involves a local search and/or a remote search;  
8           when the search involves a local search,  
9           initiating a local search of a local information source;  
10          when the search involves a remote search, the method further comprises:  
11           requesting a remote supplier to conduct a remote search to satisfy  
12 the procurement request, wherein the remote supplier is an external  
13 supplier and/or vendor who is located outside of the organization to  
14 which the user belongs, ~~and wherein the request identifies to the remote~~  
15 ~~—supplier a context in which to execute the remote search;~~  
16 ~~initiating a local search of a local information source;~~  
17           receiving results of the remote search; and  
18           filtering results of the remote search by applying the  
19 organizational procurement controls to the results of the remote search,  
20 whereby the organizational procurement controls can be applied to  
21 results of the remote search which is performed by the remote supplier;

22           merging said remote search results with results of the local search; and  
23           presenting said merged search results to the user, ~~wherein presenting~~  
24 ~~comprises displaying said merged search results with a single user interface~~  
25 ~~employed by the local information source.~~

1           2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
2           filtering said remote search results with a set of local rules.

1           3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein said filtering comprises  
2 editing said remote search results according to a set of rules regarding information  
3 that may be presented to the user.

1           4. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
2 selecting said remote information source from multiple information  
3 sources.

1           5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said remote search is  
2 conducted without the user being connected to the remote information source.

1           6. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the remote  
2 information source employs a user interface different from the user interface  
3 employed by the local information source.

1           7-8 (Canceled).

1           9. (Currently amended) The method of ~~claim 1~~ claim 30, wherein said  
2 context comprises an identity of the user.

1 | 10. (Currently amended) The method of ~~claim 1~~claim 30, wherein said  
2 | context comprises an identity of an organization operating the local information  
3 | source.

1 | 11. (Currently amended) The method of ~~claim 1~~claim 30, wherein said  
2 | context comprises a language.

1 | 12 (Canceled).

1 | 13. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said remote search and said  
2 | local search are performed at least partially in parallel.

1 | 14. (Currently amended) A computer readable storage medium storing  
2 | instructions that, when executed by a computer, cause the computer to perform a  
3 | computer-implemented method for facilitating a distributed search for a  
4 | procurement request, the method comprising:  
5 |       receiving the procurement request from a user, wherein the procurement  
6 | request is subject to organizational procurement controls, and wherein the  
7 | procurement request involves requesting goods and/or services;  
8 |       using the organizational procurement controls to determine if the search  
9 | involves a local search and/or a remote search;  
10 |       when the search involves a local search,  
11 |           initiating a local search of a local information source;  
12 |       when the search involves a remote search, the method further comprises:  
13 |           requesting a remote supplier to conduct a remote search to satisfy  
14 |       the procurement request, wherein the remote supplier is an external  
15 |       supplier and/or vendor who is located outside of the organization to

16           which the user belongs, ~~and wherein the request identifies to the remote~~  
17 ~~supplier a context in which to execute the remote search;~~  
18 ~~initiating a local search of a local information source;~~  
19           receiving results of the remote search; and  
20           filtering results of the remote search by applying the organizational  
21           procurement controls to the results of the remote search, whereby the  
22           organizational procurement controls can be applied to results of the  
23           remote search which is performed by the remote supplier;  
24           merging said remote search results with results of the local search; and  
25           presenting said merged search results to the user, ~~wherein presenting~~  
26 ~~comprises displaying said merged search results with a single user interface~~  
27 ~~employed by the local information source.~~

1           15. (Currently amended) A method of conducting a distributed electronic  
2 search for a procurement request concerning a desired procurement item, wherein  
3 the procurement request is subject to organizational procurement controls, and  
4 wherein the procurement request involves requesting goods and/or services,  
5 comprising:  
6           receiving from a user a description of an item the user desires to procure;  
7           using the organizational procurement controls to determine if the search  
8 involves a first search and/or a second search;  
9           when the search involves a first search, the method further comprises:  
10           issuing a request to a remote supplier to conduct a first search for  
11           items matching said description, without the user connecting to the  
12           remote procurement information source, wherein the remote supplier is  
13           an external supplier and/or vendor who is located outside of the  
14           organization to which the user belongs, ~~and wherein said issuing~~

15       —comprises providing the remote procurement information source with  
16       information specifying a context in which to execute the requested search;  
17       ~~providing the remote procurement information source with contextual~~  
18       ~~information for said first search;~~  
19       when the search involves a second search,  
20             performing a second search of a local procurement system for  
21             items matching said description;  
22             receiving a first set of results responsive to said first search; and  
23             filtering said first set of results by applying the organizational  
24             procurement controls to the first set of results of the remote search,  
25             whereby the organizational procurement controls can be applied to the  
26             first set of results of the remote search which is performed by the  
27             remote supplier; and  
28             presenting to the user, through a single interface ~~employed by the local~~  
29       ~~procurement information source,~~ said first set of results and a second set of results  
30       responsive to said second search.

1       16. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising:  
2       authenticating one or more of the user and the local procurement  
3       information system to the remote procurement information source.

1       17. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising:  
2       selecting the remote procurement information source from a set of  
3       procurement information sources.

1       18 (Canceled).

1           19. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein said filtering comprises  
2 removing from said first set of results any items that violate the procurement  
3 rules.

1           20. (Original) The method of claim 19, wherein the procurement rules are  
2 designed to restrict items that may be procured by the user.

1           21. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein said first search and said  
2 second search are performed at least partially in parallel.

1           22. (Currently amended) A computer readable storage medium storing  
2 instructions that, when executed by a computer, cause the computer to perform a  
3 method for conducting a distributed electronic search for a procurement request,  
4 the method comprising:

5           receiving from a user a description of an item the user desires to procure;  
6           using organizational procurement controls to determine if the search  
7 involves a first search and/or a second search;

8           when the search involves a first search, the method further comprises:  
9           issuing a request to a remote supplier to conduct a first search for  
10 items matching said description, without the user connecting to the  
11 remote procurement information source, wherein the remote supplier is  
12 an external supplier and/or vendor who is located outside of the  
13 organization to which the user belongs;

14           receiving a first set of results responsive to said first search; and  
15           filtering said first set of results by applying the organizational  
16 procurement controls to the first set of results of the remote search,  
17 whereby the organizational procurement controls can be applied to the  
18 first set of results of the remote search which is performed by the

19                remote supplier  
20                ~~providing the remote procurement information source with contextual~~  
21 ~~information for said first search;~~  
22                when the search involves a second search,  
23                performing a second search of a local procurement system for  
24                items matching said description;  
25                ~~receiving a first set of results responsive to said first search;~~  
26                ~~filtering said first set of results by applying the organizational procurement~~  
27 ~~controls to the first set of results of the remote search, whereby the organizational~~  
28 ~~procurement controls can be applied to the first set of results of the remote search~~  
29 ~~which is performed by the remote supplier; and~~  
30                presenting to the user, through a single interface ~~employed by the local~~  
31 ~~procurement information source,~~ said first set of results and a second set of results  
32 responsive to said second search.

1                23. (Previously presented) A system for facilitating a distributed search for  
2 information for a procurement request, comprising:  
3                a determination mechanism using organizational procurement controls  
4 configured to determine if the search involves a local search and/or a remote  
5 search;  
6                a local information source configured to use the results of the  
7 determination mechanism ~~to and,~~ when the search involves a local search,  
8 provide information to local users through a first user interface;  
9                a communication module configured to use the results of determination  
10 mechanism, and, when the search involves a remote search, enable said local  
11 information source to communicate with ~~send contextual information for a search~~  
12 ~~to a remote supplier, wherein the remote supplier is configured to provide~~  
13 information to users through a second user interface different from the first user

14 interface, and wherein the remote supplier is an external supplier and/or vendor  
15 who is located outside of the organization to which the user belongs;  
16 a set of rules regarding information that may be displayed to a first local  
17 user; and  
18 a processor configured to initiate, in response to a request from the first  
19 local user:  
20 a remote search of the remote information source, when the search  
21 involves a remote search; and  
22 a local search of said local information source, when the search involves a  
23 local search;  
24 wherein results of said remote search are filtered by applying the  
25 organizational procurement controls to the results of the remote search, whereby  
26 the organizational procurement controls can be applied to results of the remote  
27 search which is performed by the remote supplier and then merged with results of  
28 said local search for display to the first local user through the first user interface.

1 24. (Original) The system of claim 23, further comprising:  
2 authentication means for authenticating one or more of the system and the  
3 first local user to the remote information source.

1 25. (Original) The system of claim 23, wherein said remote search and  
2 said local search are performed in parallel.

1 26. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the  
2 organizational procurement controls include at least one of, an upper limit on a  
3 price, an upper limit on a quantity, a prohibition against a given supplier, a limit to  
4 a given brand, a limit to a given model, a limit on a delivery option, and a limit on  
5 payment terms.



1           27. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15, wherein the  
2     organizational procurement controls include at least one of, an upper limit on a  
3     price, an upper limit on a quantity, a prohibition against a given supplier, a limit to  
4     a given brand, a limit to a given model, a limit on a delivery option, and a limit on  
5     payment terms.

1           28. (Previously presented) The system of claim 23, wherein the  
2     organizational procurement controls include at least one of, an upper limit on a  
3     price, an upper limit on a quantity, a prohibition against a given supplier, a limit to  
4     a given brand, a limit to a given model, a limit on a delivery option, and a limit on  
5     payment terms.

1           29. (New) The method of claim 6, wherein said presenting comprises  
2     displaying said merged search results with the user interface employed by the  
3     local information source.

1           30. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein said requesting a remote  
2     supplier comprises identifying to the remote information source a context in  
3     which to execute the remote search.

1           31. (New) The method of claim 15, wherein said issuing comprises  
2     providing the remote procurement information source with information for  
3     identifying a context in which to execute the requested search.